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Security Council

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## Letter dated 23 March 2001 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 22 March 2001, which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

01-30410 (E) 260301

## Annex

### Letter dated 22 March 2001 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter of 8 March (see S/2001/214), I would like to inform you about the decisions taken by the North Atlantic Council today regarding the further controlled return of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian forces into additional sectors of the Ground Safety Zone.

In particular, the Council endorsed the recommendation of our military authorities that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian forces should be allowed to return into sectors A and C (West) of the Ground Safety Zone, subject to the agreement of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the specific conditions of the Commander of the Kosovo Force, on Saturday, 24 March 2001.

As to the controlled entry of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian forces into sector D, the Council asked for military advice with a view to considering this issue in the coming weeks. As regards sector B, the Council will make decisions at a later stage, also on the basis of military advice to be received in due course.

I have written to the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Vojislav Kostunica, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Goran Svilanovic, and the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, Nebojsa Covic, to inform them of the Council's decisions. In doing so, I recalled the expectations of the international community for rapid progress by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian Governments on the implementation of the political, economic and social confidence-building measures set out in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian plan for the region, independent of other progress in negotiations with the ethnic Albanian representatives. I firmly believe that concrete steps to integrate the ethnic Albanian population of the region into the political, economic and social structures of Serbia will be a critical element of the success of the peaceful approach to solving the region's problems. The importance of such steps will increase even further in the near future, particularly when the North Atlantic Council starts its consideration of the controlled entry of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian forces into sector B.

Today's decisions constitute another step in the determination of NATO to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the problems in southern Serbia. In taking these decisions, the Council welcomed the positive steps taken by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian authorities, including the return of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian forces into sector C (East) of the Ground Safety Zone in accordance with the notice of intent of the Commander of the Kosovo Force; their agreement to a ceasefire which came into effect on 13 March; and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the area around Bujanovac in accordance with that agreement. That said, other aspects of the return, such as the high-profile presence of individuals who were involved in Kosovo in 1998-1999, caused some concern and did not serve the purpose of building renewed confidence with the ethnic Albanian community in the area.

The Council also welcomed the report of my personal representative, Mr. Feith, that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian authorities have been forthcoming in responding to calls to start a dialogue with ethnic Albanian

representatives, as foreseen in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian plan for the region. We hope that this dialogue will start on Friday, 23 March.

I will keep you informed of further decisions of the Council as they are taken. I am content for you to make this letter available to members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**